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Japan Lifts Enhanced Surveillance on U.S. Parsley Producers

Report Categories:

Sanitary/Phytosanitary/Food Safety

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Report Highlights:

On March 30, 2011, the Government of Japan announced that the lifting of enhanced surveillance on U.S. parsley. Since a MRL violation of chlorpyrifos residue in 2007, 100 % of all shipments of parsley have been subject to residue testing. Effective on April 1, 2011, U.S. parsley is no longer subjected to 100% hold and test in Japan.

General Information:

On May 20, 2005, chlorpyrifos was detected in U.S. parsley (dried) at the level of 0.03 ppm. The Japanese MRL of chlorpyrifos for parsley is 0.01 ppm (not a default tolerance). The United States' MRL for chlorpyrifos for parsley was not set at that time. On August 3, 2005, after the second MRL violation at 0.06 ppm, the Government of Japan issued an 'inspection order' for U.S. parsley and processed products (such as dried parsley). With an inspection order every shipment is held at the port until the test result shows the residue level of the chemical in question to be below the MRL. Six more cases of above Japanese MRL were detected in 2005, 2007 and 2008 in the range of 0.02 - 0.24 ppm. The last violation was found on November 28, 2008.

As there have been no violations for more than two years, the GOJ has proceeded to lift the sanctions on American parsley. The GOJ's decision to lift the sanction was based on the 'Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan for FY2010', Section '4 (4) 2) Cancellation of an inspection order' (page 7, <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/yunyu/keikaku/dl/10c.pdf>).

Provisional translation of GOJ notification on the lifting of enhanced surveillance is below. The original GOJ notification in Japanese is attached.

(Provisional Translation starts)

Document #;Shoku Ann Yu Hatsu 0330-9-2

August 19, 2010

US Embassy in Tokyo
Senior Agricultural Attaché
Mr. Jeffrey Nawn

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare
Director of Import Food Safety

Regarding the handling of US food

Regarding the food item shown below, we have been practicing the 'Inspection Order' based on Food Sanitation Law, Article 26 Section 3. We studied the import status of US parsley recently and decided to delete the food item from the list of Inspection Order.

However, to study the possibility of Food Sanitation Law violation, we will maintain the 30% monitoring rate for a period of time. If there is a violation found from US parsley with same substance during the period of 30% monitoring, we will re-issue the Inspection Order immediately.

We would like to ask you the continuing efforts to maintain food safety so exports to Japan do not violate the Food Sanitation Law.

Note

Name of food item and chemical substance to be lifted from Inspection Order

Food item; Parsley and its processed products (only simple processing)

Chemical substance; Chlorpyrifos

(Provisional Translation ends)